

**YESHE MELONG**  
*'Mirror of Wisdom'*  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**March 1996**

**Spiritual Advice from Gyatrul Rinpoche**

*Orgyen Dorje Den, San Francisco, January 1996*      While I am in Asia, if you would like to continue to receive teachings on *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*, Alan (Wallace) can continue to teach you. On the other hand, if you want to take a break and rest, that is also a possibility. If you want to invite other teachers to come, that is also a possibility. It is your choice.

I am not speaking to just one person; I am speaking to all of you. You can meet and make the decision among yourselves, and this should not be one person's idea which everyone else has to follow. This is not the American way, with one person's imposing his or her will on everybody else. In early Tibet, that sometimes happened; but even now among Tibetans, this is not the case. Even His Holiness the Dalai Lama is not a totalitarian leader with everybody following his word. Our task here is to practice Dharma, not to engage in politics.

I say this not only for this center in San Francisco but for all the centers. It is very important that we do not get distracted away from Dharma and into politics. If we do, there is absolutely no chance of our practice leading to liberation or enlightenment. Rather, it will only lead to lower rebirth, and we will remain unenlightened in spite of all the efforts of the great buddhas of the past such as Shakyamuni and Padmasambhava. Many of us think, "Well, I have a good heart. I have a good mind. I have a good motivation." We should bear in mind the fact that the bodhisattvas have a better motivation. In relation to the many ups and downs that life sends us, it's not enough to have the desire to be of service to others; sentient beings must accept what you are offering. The cause and effect must come from both sides, not just from the pure motivation on the part of the bodhisattva. Therefore, Buddhists strongly emphasize the importance of method and wisdom together.

It's not enough to think that, because your ideas are positive, you should push them. There will be no success with that method. On the contrary, you will probably just meet with negativity. Therefore, we need to be skillful, knowing when to push our ideas and when to be more passive, withdrawing and letting things follow their own course. A excellent example of this skill is His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He knows when to push and really advocate something, and, moreover, he knows when to take a more passive role. He knows how to follow the bodhisattva's way of life in accordance with the needs and inclinations of society. He is thoroughly versed in both the sutras and tantras and has much experience teaching them. Yet, in order to meet the needs of others, he does a variety of things: he speaks in broken English and he jokes around. He does things that do not appear meaningful, but all of his actions are in response to the individual needs of sentient beings. Out of his omniscient awareness, he recognizes each individual's capacity and inclination. We, on the other hand, do not see this. Therefore, we push and

meet with failure. On the other hand, bodhisattvas who are endowed with both method and wisdom find success. His Holiness really demonstrates this bodhisattva way of life, unlike the father who beats his kids or wife. We should not use sheer manpower to push our way through. Like all bodhisattvas, we need to learn skillful means and develop the wisdom to guide them.

All sentient beings, whether engaged in virtue or nonvirtue, have their own desires, and everyone has his or her own priorities. We all think that our ideas, our priorities, and our desires are the good ones. Recognizing this, slow down. If we want to be of service to others, we need to know that they're willing to accept what we wish to offer, instead of just throwing around our influence. Not only does this not meet with success, it brings disgrace. Instead of being of benefit, it actually inflicts harm upon others. Therefore, in terms of both spiritual and mundane activities, be careful, and avoid gossip and slander at all costs. In terms of Dharma, we have heard many teachings on karma pertaining to the nature of activities and consequences, so we should well be familiar with that. Even for mundane activities, let alone spiritual activities, the attitude of "I know and others don't" only leads to our own demise. The worst tendency is to gossip, and this occurs in both spiritual and purely worldly communities. It's really something that we must abandon. Gossip, abuse, slander and so forth carry no benefit whatever. In particular, slander only causes harm and is absolutely incompatible with Dharma.

What is the benefit of engaging in Dharma? It's not just to put up prayer flags or for external displays. The whole point is to purify the mental afflictions and distortions of our own minds. The Dharma we practice should act as an antidote for attachment, delusion, hatred, jealousy and pride. By so doing, our practice of Dharma will lead to joy

### *Losar Message from Gyatrul Rinpoche*

*Tashi Deleg* to all the Sangha members—old, young, mature, immature, naughty! Welcome to the New Year!

Since we started Yeshe Nyingpo, you guys everywhere have helped support us. Now we've finished our job and it's your turn. We finished the temple up there at Tashi Chöling, inside and outside, bottom to top, outside statues, prayer flags, prayer wheel. In Ensenada, Mexico we did the 35-foot Tara statue. Maybe in March or April, Deborah and Colleen will go back to finish the painting, so that project they can take care of. Hopefully, the students in Mexico can put on the top some sort of protection from the rain.

I just visited Taiwan for two weeks and now I'm in India for two months at H.H. Penor Rinpoche's monastery where Khenpo Namdrol and Holiness are giving teachings on the *Sangwa Nyingpo*. If my health and luck is good, I will go on to Tibet for one month to visit my sister and other relatives. Then I'm coming back in May or June, and we're going to build the East Wing at Tashi Chöling. Hopefully, we will have the "Mr. Greens" if somebody again sacrifices from their pockets. Then everybody again, we have to sacrifice ourselves, earning the merit to finish that East Wing. Also, we want to build the canopies over the statues at Tashi Chöling—Vajrasattva and the two Taras—and finish the prayer wheel building, the paintings, and all the other things to finish that project.

When I come back, you need to support me with the East Wing project and the statue canopies. I'm asking now for you to support me again. Since I came to the United States, I've tried different things. Some things worked; most things worked. With some things, I didn't have big merit or wisdom, so they didn't work. So, this is the last chance we have together—to finish the East Wing and the statue area. Then, we can breathe freely and be happy.

Why am I saying “happy” stuff? . . .because I'm happy. Yeshe's teaching at his centers. I am his teacher, he is my student, now he is a teacher—this is really meaningful, and I'm really happy. Buddhism's like this: first you have to learn, then you have to examine yourself and think about everything, and then practice. If you don't have that, how are you going to become a teacher?

It's the same thing with Jetsunma; she is trying really hard and is really successful even with lots of obstacles. Therefore, I'm happy. And Dröllöd's (Bruce Newman) up there trying to help the people up in Ashland and Tashi Chöling. So, I'm really happy. Then Alan (Wallace) is very good in the Bay Area; he is trying everything: translating, teaching. Before, Sangye Khandro translated everything we're using at Tashi Chöling and Yeshe Nyingpo, everything we sell in the Archives. Her energy and wisdom produced all this work, but she didn't exactly teach. Now she has started to teach. First she practiced dzogchen, she practiced Tröma, the highest practices; now she's teaching. I'm really happy that they're finally doing this. I don't have a long life, but I'm happy. These guys can take over, give you teachings and support, if you want. If you want teaching from them, they do have qualities, and that makes me happy.

My request is to be in harmony, respect each other, love each other. This is our goal in Buddhism everywhere. Sangye told me that up there at Tashi Chöling people are really in harmony, really practicing, and that makes me really happy. I haven't heard from the other centers, but I haven't heard anything negative and that's very good.

and happiness both in this lifetime and in the future. On the other hand, if it doesn't act as an antidote for these mental afflictions, it is simply a waste of time.

Be aware that our lives are short, like a flash. In this brief moment of life, we spend so much time planning for what we will do later. *Now* we have the power and influence as to how we spend our time. Therefore, little by little apply yourself to the practice of Dharma. If you were to die right now, could you face your death with confidence? If so, on what grounds is this confidence based? Will you be happy to die? If you are suffering from a grave and painful disease and are thinking that death will be a welcome release, what makes you so sure that death will give this release? If you have devoted your life to the ten nonvirtues, why do you think that death implies any kind of release or freedom? A life lived in that way simply leads to rebirth in a miserable state of existence which is only the nature of suffering.

If you want release gained by the practice of Dharma, don't lie to yourself. Enough is enough! Now is the time to accomplish your own self-interest by devoting your body, speech and mind to the pure practice of Dharma. That leads to genuine benefit to both yourself and to others. All of us seek joy, and engaging in practice leads to eternal joy. This is wise counsel whether you are a man or woman, Buddhist or not.

If you decide to invite lamas and teachers, you must relate harmoniously with each other. Also remember that it is of no benefit to try a smorgasbord of Dharma—nibbling from many lamas and many different centers—and actually practicing nothing. More importantly, swallow and digest what you have already received. Again I remind you that, within each center and among different centers, it is very important that your relationships be harmonious. Here I am referring to my centers in Portland, Newport, Ashland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Fe, and Ensenada, as well as Jetsunma's center in Washington D.C. Please join ranks and work together. Even if it is not practical to do this in person, at least join together in spirit with the large centers helping the small centers, the small centers helping the large centers, all working together.

It is up to the individual to stay informed with what's happening at his or her center. The few people who run each center are themselves busy with many responsibilities, so you must be responsible to find out for yourself. It is also the responsibility of the people who run the center to inform people of teachings and other events in a fair and equal manner. It is important that the people who run the centers do not turn into politicians and spend their time gossiping among themselves. This is no good, and I have no use for it at all. A center is a name for something that is happening that is of benefit to us and the surrounding community. If you have a problem with a particular center, most likely the problem is yours because you hold the attitude that you're special and then develop an aversion toward the center. The Dharma gathering is the basis for bringing meaning to your precious human life, and assisting with the spread of Buddhism is important because it is of benefit. Buddhism will remain until it's time is over; however, if we have a casual attitude toward Buddhism and it declines, the harm done is only to ourselves.

At the very least, have a good heart. It is said that, if your mind and heart are peaceful within, then the grounds and paths will be peaceful. What are the grounds and paths? They don't refer to Interstate 5. If your mind is peaceful and your heart is good, the grounds and paths are your daily life. If your heart is bad and your mind unruly, then this, too, will be the course of your life. Think of Dharma and think about how to get along among yourselves. No matter what problems you create for each other, keep in mind that they are not unbearable. If you live in harmony, it's a sign of Dharma practice. If not, it's a disgrace.

*Gyatrul Rinpoche*

## **Waking**

My fear of love is tearing me down,  
all I have been has become  
a source of pain. Each thought of myself  
has smothered a prayer to open  
the hard pit of my soul,  
a fugitive.

All I want is to truly love.  
There is nothing else, no life  
without my offering everything  
for your happiness  
because you are the world.

All our suffering crowds the night  
that falls on me from your eyes.  
We share our burden like equally broken bones.  
I am setting this diamond firmly in my heart  
and bleed as it cuts away the lie  
that we are separate.  
The conflicts between us  
are facets of darkness  
that shatter and spread out  
wherever love is denied.

My excuses are shards in your hand,  
hands on my throat, no one is safe.  
Anger has strangled my goodness  
and I am the war, I am the prisoner.

I am the way of escape.  
Love has betrayed my madness, the hard voice  
screaming to be first, the curse of the familiar,  
and I am left in pieces.  
I don't know where I am  
I don't know what will come  
I don't know how to be, I only dream.  
I dream you are me.

I dream of waking.

*Julie Rogers*

**Successful Retreat on the Six Bardos**

March 1996

During August and September of 1995, students from various sanghas in the western United States participated in a successful one-month retreat with Gyatrul Rinpoche. The retreat was organized by Orgyen Dorje Den, Yeshe Nyingpo's center in San Francisco. The idea of this retreat came from a series of teachings which Gyatrul Rinpoche had given January-March 1995 on the text entitled *The Profound Dharma of Natural Liberation through Contemplating the Peaceful and the Wrathful* composed by Padmasambhava and revealed by Karma Lingpa. These teachings and the root text were translated by B. Alan Wallace and will be published by Wisdom Publications next year.

During the retreat Gyatrul Rinpoche traveled from his home in Half Moon Bay to the retreat site at Mt. Alverno Conference Center in Redwood City, California, accompanied by his personal attendant Mimi Hohenberg and Alan Wallace. Alan worked diligently to complete and refine his translation of the root text, sometimes completing the chapters only hours before they were to be taught. The Tibetan monk Rigdzin Nyima acted as *ömse* and proved to be of tremendous help to the retreatants. As the practice sessions progressed, Les Collins and other students led the group in reading the English translations and visualizations, as well as chanting the *ngöndro* in the mornings. Each day involved four sessions of practice that incorporated many types of prayer, meditation and contemplation, interspersed with Rinpoche's wonderful teachings.

The retreat had a very profound effect on everyone and included ordained sangha, several children, and several sangha members suffering from illnesses such as Aids and cancer. To have members of our own spiritual family undergoing this type of suffering during a retreat which embraced preparation for death had an intense impact. The courage and dedication of these students cannot be praised enough, and the empathy of their caregivers is an example of practical *bodhicitta* from which we can all learn. Rinpoche directed our attention on many occasions to the reality of suffering and impermanence and assured us that these students were a motivating factor in his decision to offer this retreat to the sangha at large. It was an incredibly moving experience to see our friends put forth such effort to hear the teachings while suffering the effects of these terrible diseases in our midst.

The opportunity of the phone hook-up enabled students at Tashi Chöling in Oregon to hear the teachings and practice along with the retreatants. Altogether at least 70 students were able to begin learning the many aspects of accomplishing the transitional processes in a supportive atmosphere of spiritual growth. The Orgyen Dorje Den sangha worked very hard to offer their energy and provide an enriching experience.

Many thanks and real gratitude to our precious teacher Gyatrul Rinpoche, Alan Wallace, the ODD sangha, and all those who made it possible. Sincere prayers for all those suffering with illness and for John Brown and Glen Margo who died in February of this year.

*Julie Rogers*

## **Sangye Khandro Leads Dudjom Tersar Tröma Retreat**

From January 20 through February 4, 1996, Sangye Khandro led a well-attended retreat for the practice Tröma Nagmo. She was assisted by Tulku Yeshe Nyima, a reincarnation of an accomplished chöd practitioner. Sangye received the chöd instructions directly from H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and practiced them in retreat under his guidance. The deity generation of Tröma Nagmo and the practice of chöd have been Sangye's main focus in her 25 years as a practicing Buddhist. The practice of chöd is a method of cutting through attachment and ego fixation through the visualization of offering one's body. Practiced properly, it has the potential to subdue one's personal "demons," calm inner conflict, and ultimately lead to enlightenment.

The retreat was held at Tashi Chöling, retreat center for Yeshe Nyingpo in the heart of the Siskiyou Mountains of southern Oregon. Four sessions were held each day, consisting of teachings given by Sangye and sadhana practice using the traditional instruments of thigh-bone trumpet, bell and large hand drum. Winter weather amplified the level of intensity during the retreat, and at one point there was 3-1/2 feet of snow on the ground and no electricity!

The retreat was quite successful for all who attended, and the power of the practice seemed to renew the potency of the retreat land in general. The last day of the retreat concluded with a very early morning session and powerful fire puja officiated by Sangye and Yeshe.

As requested by her teachers, Sangye Khandro will begin public teaching on the practice of chöd in Boulder, Colorado in late June 1996. For more information, contact David Bolduc at 1107 Pearl St., Boulder, CO 80302.

*Kay Henry*

## **News from the Centers**

### ***Orgyen Dorje Den/San Francisco***

ODD is pleased to announce that, due to Gyatrul Rinpoche's teaching schedule, we've had our busiest year to date since the birth of the center in San Francisco! Here is a brief overview of the year's activities. . .

Early in January '95, Bay Area students concluded ten weeks of meditation classes given by Bruce Newman. These classes were so well received that we are committed to inviting him back to teach, as soon as we have a break in our current schedule and when Bruce can accommodate our request, since he is presently living at Tashi Chöling, acting as resident spiritual adviser.

Throughout winter and spring Gyatrul Rinpoche continued teaching from the text *The Union of Mahamudra and Atiyoga*, as well as giving teachings on the Six Bardos. Alan Wallace assisted Rinpoche and acted as translator. During the bardo teachings, discussion was started about a possible retreat organized by our center, and the logistics of sponsoring the retreat began. Lots of phoning and footwork were involved in determining which retreat facilities were available and suitable. After considering many aspects of the retreat (by now it was already mid-summer), we chose Mt. Alverno Retreat and Conference Center in Redwood City. This site was selected so that retreatants could

concentrate on the practices rather than on cooking and cleaning and due to the fact that the staff were so kind and flexible.

The expenses and location caused problems for some, especially those without financial resources to stay on site, but we housed as many as possible with local sangha and provided others with information on camping. After the event, we received lots of positive feedback from participants and the staff and will consider using Mt. Alverno again in the future.

Last fall and this winter, we received visits from Khenpo Tsewang Gyatso, H.E. Shenphen Rinpoche, and Tulku Yeshe Nyima. Khenpo Tsewang—one of three senior khenpos from H.H. Penor Rinpoche's monastery in south India—has taught approximately one-third of the Ninth Chapter of the *Bodhicharyavatara*, and he is continuing these teachings this spring. Shenphen Rinpoche gave two spontaneous talks on the nature of the mind, and Yeshe Nyima held a four-day Vajrasattva retreat using the Kater Vajrasattva sadhana from the treasury of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche.

We are fortunate that Alan Wallace continues as Gyatrul Rinpoche's translator and is also continuing to teach from the *Bodhicharyavatara* in Rinpoche's absence. Beginning March 27, Alan will begin to teach a class based on his book *Buddhism from the Ground Up*. This class will be held at Orgyen Dorje Den on Wednesday nights from 7-8:30 p.m.

Our center is organizing! In mid-February members of the sangha formed three groups to help implement the planning and promoting of teachings and other events and to broaden membership. This organization reflects the growing participation and cooperation of both new and old sangha members, bringing in fresh interest and energy. We are all pleased by this!

Sadly, we lost two valuable sangha members in February: first John Brown and then Glen Margo. We shall miss them both.

*Sally Rogers*  
Orgyen Dorje Den  
410 Townsend St., Suite 406  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
415-546-7915

### ***Mexico***

We are still taking care of our wonderful Tara statue and making plans for this year's work. Deborah and Colleen are scheduled to return to complete the painting of Tara's throne, and we hope to build and complete the back support. Many hundreds of people visit the statue regularly, and we invite all of you to come see our Tara.

Mexico Yeshe Nyingpo  
c/o Beamonte  
P.o. Box 43174  
San Ysidro, CA 92143  
526-176-7848

### ***Tashi Chöling/Ashland***

During the last year we sponsored a very well-received series of classes given by Bruce Newman. Bruce's classes were *Relaxing the Mind*—a basic meditation class, *Awakening the Heart*—a class learning how to generate compassion for self and others,

and the *Practice of Avalokiteshvara*—a class learning how to do the practice of the Buddha of Compassion. Bruce will begin another class on *Relaxing the Mind* Tuesday, March 26, and this class will be held every Tuesday through April 23.

In August we hosted a visit by Tulku Sang Ngag, an eminent young tulku from Nepal who was trained by H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. He gave brief teachings and an Avalokiteshvara empowerment in Ashland. In December we were happy to have a surprise visit by H.E. Shenphen Rinpoche and family; Rinpoche gave spontaneous teachings on the nature of the mind and private interviews.

Here at Tashi Chöling we are looking forward to a busy year. Spring will bring the beginning of construction of the East Wing of the temple. This project is very important in the completion phase of Tashi Chöling, as it adds facilities for archives, meeting hall, food serving and other accommodations. The statue garden has a new prayer wheel building which is being completed and will be getting art work by Sonam Tsering and Cheku, artists from Nepal. Protective canopies for the statues and a complete reworking of the lawn and flower beds will begin as soon as weather permits. There is lots of work to be done, and we look forward to any of you coming to participate in these rich and rewarding activities.

Gyatrul Rinpoche will be here this spring and summer, adding his energy and wisdom to our work. There is also a possibility that Shenphen Rinpoche will return in August to begin preparation for the Dudjom Tersar empowerments in September and October. Please set aside time for this special event. As things firm up, everyone will be notified.

Our very best wishes to you all. This is your country center, and we are happy to serve you in any way.

Philip Thomas  
Tashi Chöling  
P.O. Box 64  
Ashland, OR 97520  
541-482-2399

### ***Greetings from Santa Fe/Osal Nyingpo***

One of the highlights of our year was the visit by Tulku Sang Ngag, who gave the *lung*, *wang* and commentary on the Mindroling Vajrasattva for ten days in August. Sangye Khandro translated for Tulku Sang Ngag, and the event was well-attended by the community. Rinpoche gave extensive teachings on the *ngöndro* and development stage of Vajrasattva. The Vajrasattva tantra is the first tantra to be revealed to King Dza and is the primary mandala of the entire Rinchen Ter Dzod.

Tulku Sang Ngag has promised to return to Osal Nyingpo and has made a commitment to teach the *tsa lung*, *trekchöd* and *togyal* of Vajrasattva which he received in entirety from H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche in Bhutan. At this time, we are looking for retreat land to purchase to facilitate these kinds of advanced teachings and practices.

Also in the fall, we were visited by Gyatrul Rinpoche who assisted Tulku Sang Ngag in the five-day consecration ceremonies of the stupa for Ngagpa Yeshe Dorje. The blessings of the lamas and the ceremonies they performed elicited miraculous activities seen by many people.

Our resident lama, Tulku Yeshe Nyima, is currently in India with Gyatrul Rinpoche and Sangye Khandro receiving teachings from H.H. Penor Rinpoche and Khenpo Namdrol, senior khenpo at the monastery in south India.

Osal Nyingpo  
63 A Kachina Road  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
505-474-8271

### ***News from Newport***

Here in Newport, Oregon it's been a year of healing and re-emphasizing the impermanence of life. Not only have Ann and Heidi mended from their severe accident, Heidi (who is six) is now very "tuned in" to people who are suffering. She visits nursing homes regularly and is not afraid to relate to people who are old, infirm or suffering.

The Newport sangha is holding discussion groups, becoming active in hospice and the local interfaith group, and helping with bringing the performing Tibetan monks to the Performing Arts Center in Newport in September. Ann Goddard is now making zafu's (meditation cushions) for kids; if interested, contact Ann.

Newport Yeshe Nyingpo  
5380 N. Beaver Creek Road  
Seal Rock, OR 97375  
503-563-5729

### ***Portland Yeshe Nyingpo***

Yeshe Nyingpo Portland is pleased to assist with the return visit by H.H. Kusum Lingpa to our area. He will be teaching from Thursday, May 2 to Sunday, May 5 at Portland State University. This will be his last stop in the U.S. before leaving for Europe. We'll have a brochure out with the details by late March. Rinpoche's visit will be hosted by Jane and Michael Crowley.

Jane and Michael Crowley generously hosted a two-month residency and subsequent teachings of Lama Kalsang Dondul of Dharamsala, India. Jane and Michael founded and coordinated with Lama Kalsang the Jamtse Educational Society which sponsors the education of Tibetan refugee children in India. Founded in 1989, there have been 70 scholarships given and more than \$37,700 raised to date. If anyone would like more information about this worthy cause, please contact the Crowley's at 503-232-5004. You are welcome to sponsor a child, monk or nun.

As usual, our *ngöndro* practice continues on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the temple on Skyline Blvd. The Orgyen Jhambala practice continues on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Jane and Michael Crowley's.

*Clark Hansen*  
Portland Yeshe Nyingpo  
3200 NW Skyline Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97229-3815  
503-292-4004

For Dharma events and activities of Los Angeles Yeshe Nyingpo, contact David Johnston, 627 Santa Clara Ave. #4, Venice, CA 90201, 310-450-2559.